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DATE

Bon Voyage 2023

◆ **Wed 6 Dec, 6pm** ◆
Full details released this week

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features seven pages of the latest travel industry news, plus a special update from **Globus family of brands** and full pages from:

- TAFE NSW
- Helloworld

Enhance your skills

NOW is the perfect time to brush up on your skills and boost your career, with enrolments now open for TAFE courses in 2024, including Certificate III and IV Travel and Tourism - to learn more, see **page eight**.

The Globus touch

GLOBUS is highlighting a collection of low season itineraries, offering travellers the chance to experience popular destinations while paying less.

See the **back page** to discover more about the Escapes by Globus collection.

Perth to host WTTC in '24

THE World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) will host its next Global Summit in Perth, with the WA Capital announced as the location for the first time the event has ever been in Oceania.

To be conducted in partnership with Tourism Western Australia, the news was released at the closing of the 2023 summit on the weekend in Kigali, Rwanda.

More than 1,200 delegates are in Africa for this year's event, which included commentators such as America's Transportation Security Administration Administrator, David P Pekoske, and global economist Justin Urquhart-Stewart.

Representatives from more than 45 countries took part and were present for the announcement of Perth as the host city for 2024.

The WA Government secured the prestigious business event via a bid from Tourism Western Australia and Business Events

Perth, with the support of Business Events Australia.

Tourism WA MD Carolyn Turnbull said hosting the 24th WTTC Global Summit presented a significant opportunity for the state to demonstrate its growth ambition and investment opportunities to members, who include the leaders of key global travel businesses such as airlines, cruise operators, investors and global hotel management firms.

"The effect of hosting this event goes far beyond the immediate economic impact generated from delegate spend; this event will open avenues for conversation around inbound trade and product investments, new inbound aviation routes and the development of high value tourism product business opportunities," Turnbull said.

The WTTC Global Summit in Perth is scheduled to take place in late 2024. *BP*

Air NZ axes Hobart

ISSUES identified in P&W1100 engines have led to Air New Zealand making the call to ground flights between Auckland and Hobart from 05 Apr next year to undergo important maintenance.

The engines are installed in 13 of the Kiwi carrier's narrow-body aircraft, with the Hobart route temporarily axed as the airline juggles aircraft resources to accommodate engine checks.

"Bookings remain strong for Hobart over summer however we had to plan for changes to the availability of our fleet due to required maintenance," Air New Zealand GM Short-Haul Jeremy O'Brien said.

A "small number of customers" had already booked to travel from Apr onwards, Air NZ said, with travellers having the option to either rebook on a stop-over service or opt for a full refund of their fare.

The carrier said it is currently unable to name a return date.

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QF defends Garuda deal

QANTAS has rebuffed accusations from rivals that a codeshare proposal with Garuda will lessen competition (**TD** 16 Oct), claiming the criticism fails to incorporate the Indonesian carrier's reduced fleet size.

In a letter to the International Air Services Commission, Qantas Executive Manager, Government, Industry & Competition Anna Pritchard said the pandemic had impacted Garuda's ability to sell and market itineraries to Aussie travellers, and that the proposed deal represented a "pro-competitive expansion".

"Rather than reducing competitive tension between Qantas and Garuda, competition on the Indonesia route will increase as a result of enabling Garuda Indonesia to sell more itinerary options, with both [airlines] continuing to price and sell independently of each other," she explained.



"[The codeshare] will not alter the incentives of carriers on the Australia to Indonesia route to continue competing and innovating to attract passengers."

Virgin Australia had objected to the mooted move, claiming a Garuda/Qantas pact would mean there is "no way of growing its market share" on the route.

Qantas dismissed the claim however, pointing to routes outside of third-fourth freedom services being ripe for expansion, such as VA's Gold Coast to Denpasar service, which added 90,000 seats for the carrier a year.

Garuda is yet to return to pre-COVID capacity levels on the Australia-Indonesia route.

Qantas is seeking to codeshare with Garuda on 12 routes. **AB**

Getting Cocky in WA

COCKY Guides is preparing to debut its range of tours for blind and low-vision travellers in Western Australia, completing its full Australian expansion plan.

The first tour in the state will launch in Dec and is already sold out, with adventures to cover Perth and the state's south-west.

Cocky Guides is initially offering eight-day tours in Perth and Busselton for groups of 12 blind and low-vision travellers, with several more adventures in the state already in the works.

Cocky said it is working with a group of local operators to create inclusive experiences, including Autopia Tours, Sealink Rottnest Island, Perth Wildlife Encounters, Koomal Dreaming, and the Yanche Lavender Farm.

Since its launch in 2018, Cocky Guides has returned more one million dollars to the Australian visitor economy.

More information on the operator's range of tours **HERE**.

Get out of Lebanon

THE strong possibility of an increase in armed conflict in the Middle East has led to DFAT issuing an upgraded warning for Aussie travellers in Lebanon, urging a return home while flights remain available.

In an updated travel advisory, the Australian Govt said Beirut Airport would likely close if the security situation deteriorates.

Win a big Swiss trip

TRAVEL agents have the chance to win themselves a famil to Switzerland in early 2024 via a new incentive from Rail Europe.

Top-selling advisors of Swiss Travel Passes from now until 31 Jan will be in with a chance to score a spot, with agents needing to sell at least five Swiss Travel Passes to qualify.

The top-selling advisor for each month will also take home a special-edition Bucherer watch.

For more details, see **HERE**.



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New Viking vouchers

VIKING is upping its game with travel agents, offering new Viking Voyage Vouchers as part of its Rewards by Viking program.

Available in denominations of \$100, \$200, and \$500 from the Viking online store, the new redemption options can be exchanged for points and used toward booking Viking cruises.

Points are earned by participating in promotions and completing Viking's various training modules.

APAC almost back

PASSENGER air traffic in most of the Asia-Pacific region should return to pre-pandemic levels over the next 12-18 months.

The claim was made by a new report, *Asia-Pacific Aviation Is On A Recovery Runway*, which stated relaxed Chinese borders had contributed the most to the prediction, but also cautioned air tickets were likely to rise.

China numbers dwindle

THE recovery of the Chinese visitor market continues to lag well behind the rest of Australia's other big source markets, the latest data from Tourism Research Australia (TRA) shows.

Travellers from China made 52,000 trips Down Under throughout Aug, reaching only 48% of pre-COVID levels and down on the previous month of Jul, which saw volumes reach 54% of pre-pandemic numbers.

While Chinese visitor spend also dropped from 84% to 58% of 2019 value, it should be noted the \$440 million spent in Aug was still well ahead of any other overseas market, proving why Tourism Australia is chasing Chinese tourists so hard in the post-COVID era.

In comparison, Japan recovered to 69% of pre-COVID levels in Aug, while New Zealand improved to 84% and the United States and India both rose to 92%.

Overall, visitors from overseas spent \$2.1 billion in Australia throughout Aug dispersed across 551,000 trips, representing 85% and 78% recovery in spend and trips taken respectively.

The result showed a downward trend compared to Jul, where total int'l visitor numbers recovered to 80% and spend was 98% of 2019 levels.

Australia's regional destinations took the biggest hit, with int'l trips declining from 70% and 89% spend in Jul to 65% trip numbers and 68% spend in Aug.

MEANWHILE, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese was in Beijing over the weekend to talk up tourism ties with China.

Peter Arkell, the former Chair of the Australian Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai, stated the meeting will "get stuff moving back in the right direction" and boost the Chinese community's confidence in Australia. *JM*

ADL's Hirst choice

ADELAIDE Airport has announced Mike Hirst (**pictured**) as its newest Director.

Hirst was Bendigo & Adelaide Bank Chief Executive Officer & MD from 2009 to 2018, and during that time, he led the bank through the global financial crisis, and was able to substantially grow its retail base.

He has also previously worked for Colonial as its Treasury General Manager and Financial Services Treasurer.

Hirst's appointment follows the passing of former board member Jane Yulie earlier this year.



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PNG Aussie routes?

THE national carrier of Papua New Guinea has signed a new order with Airbus to acquire six single-aisle A220-100s under its fleet modernisation program.

Air Niugini made the announcement at an event in Port Moresby over the weekend, with the aircraft to provide the possibility of operating new routes from Port Moresby across the Asia-Pacific region.

PNG previously flagged Australia as a target for tourism growth in a new four-year plan (**TD** 23 Mar).

A Munda-ful reno

THE revamped Munda Int'l Airport terminal in the Solomon Islands has been officially reopened following a US\$23.6 million renovation.

Key upgrades in airport infrastructure mean Solomon Airlines can reintroduce direct services from Munda to Brisbane later this month.

HLO board buy in

HELLOWORLD independent Non-Executive Directors, Martin Pakula and Leanne Coddington, have been aligning their interests with those of HLO shareholders recently, with both boosting their stakes in the company.

Notices lodged with the Australian Securities Exchange show that Coddington purchased an initial parcel of 45,000 Helloworld shares on-market last week for \$104,400.

Pakula already held 3,000 shares and spent \$4,758 to purchase an additional 2,000, according to an ASX update released this morning.

Golding joins BIG4

JULIE Golding has left Ponant to take up a new role with BIG4 Holiday Parks of Australia as Park Success Specialist NSW.

She was with Ponant for almost three years, and prior to that spent more than five years with Silversea Cruises.

Collette set for a big 2024



COLLETTE is ramping up its operations in Australia, with the tour operator's VP of Global Marketing, Willie Montano, last week meeting with a range of trade partners to make plans for strong growth next year.

Also in town was Christian Liebl-Cote, Executive VP of Global Sales, with the visit following the recent appointment of Karen

Deveson as Collette's new MD for Australia (**TD** 23 Oct) and Jaclyn Leibl-Cote as just the firm's fourth CEO in over a century (**TD** 10 Oct).

On Fri, the team hosted trade partners for a catch-up in Sydney, where Montano (left) and Leibl-Cote (right) are **pictured** with Collette Head of Sales David Farrar and Marketing Manager Australia, Nicole Silburn. **BP**

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FCM double Asia hire

FLIGHT Centre Travel Group's (FCTG) largest corporate arm FCM has made two major appointments to shore up its Asian expansion plans.

Kenji Soh has been appointed General Manager of FCM Singapore while Clement Wong will take on the role of Chief Growth Officer for Asia.

Most recently, Soh headed up strategic travel management for companies like Goldman Sachs and Bain & Company, and boasts close to 15 years of travel management experience.

Meanwhile, Wong will be charged with overseeing the strategy, supply, partnerships, data, and legal teams for FCM.

Only last month, FCTG revealed that corporate travel between Australia and Asia for FCM had surged during the last financial quarter (**TD** 23 Oct), while FCM's Meetings & Events (M&E) division also revealed recent plans to expand its services globally.

Cash is still king: Travelex

MORE than half of Australian outbound travellers still use cash as their primary form of foreign currency when overseas, according to new research from forex specialist Travelex.

More than 1,800 respondents took part in a study which found younger travellers in particular preferred cash, either purchased before travel, withdrawn at the airport or in-destination.

Travelex highlighted the difference between pre-travel and during-travel behaviour, with customers usually savvy about getting the best possible rate prior to departure.

Once they are on their trips, however, the typical mindset shifts and "enjoyment takes priority", with pre-determined spending plans and budgets quickly forgotten, Travelex said.

"When travellers run out of funds during a trip, they don't hesitate to exchange more

money," the research found.

About two-thirds of those who bought foreign cash before travel or used a pre-paid travel money card were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their experience.

By contrast there were significant levels of dissatisfaction among those who bought cash at the airport, withdrew cash in-location or used credit cards, due to transaction costs/fees and unexpected bank charges.

Transparency and value were cited as customer drivers, with digital foreign exchange products appealing because of the ability to order foreign cash in-app and pick up after arrival, conversion of overseas spend in Aussie dollars, and being able to hold foreign currency until needed.

While digital products are on the rise, cash "remains the currency format of choice for travellers", according to Travelex MD ANZ, Darren Brown. *BP*



Window Seat

CHRISTMAS has already landed at Singapore's Changi Airport, with visitors now able to immerse themselves in a candy-themed wonderland as part of the hub's holiday festivities.

The whimsical attraction, which runs until the end of Mar 2024, will offer a plethora of carnival games and rides, including a merry-go-round, go-kart course and a "Candy Snow House" that's filled with carved ice sculptures.

There's even a five-metre long snow slide and a mini golf course made entirely of ice.



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TIME celebrates another successful year

THE Travel Industry Mentor Experience (TIME) held its final function for 2023 last week, with the organisation going from strength to strength with yet another new cohort of graduates, as well as the staggering 54th intake of mentees joining the program. The gathering was generously hosted at the Sydney offices of The Travel Corporation, and as well as inspirational presentations from those graduating from the program, guest speaker Bruce Piper from the Business Publishing Group described the mid-life change in direction, which led to his career in the industry.

“What a night it was,” said TIME founder Penny Spencer. “The vibe in the room was one of collaboration, sharing, laughter and genuine excitement for those graduating.”

“We can’t wait to take more people on the TIME journey in 2024,” Spencer added.

The graduating group pictured at left with some of their mentors including Anthony Drury, Penny Spencer, Rachel Cleary, Emina Hiko, Maxine Wiggs, Sharon Stanley, Gareth Coakley, Liz Beattie, Tania Myles, Christine Oliver, Samantha Van Eldik, Brett Thomson and Justin Montgomery.



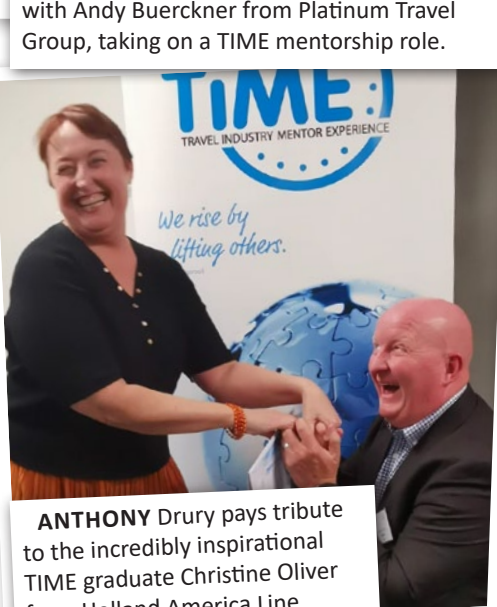
GUEST speaker Bruce Piper from *Travel Daily* with Andy Buerckner from Platinum Travel Group, taking on a TIME mentorship role.



PENNY Spencer with TIME graduate Liz Beattie from Amadeus.



MENTOR Martin Cowley with his protege Brett Thomson from The Appointment Group.



ANTHONY Drury pays tribute to the incredibly inspirational TIME graduate Christine Oliver from Holland America Line.



RACHEL Cleary, whose energetic graduating speech had the audience in stitches, is pictured with mentor Sharon Stanley.



TANIA Myles from TravelManagers is also now a TIME graduate, and is pictured with TIME founder Penny Spencer.

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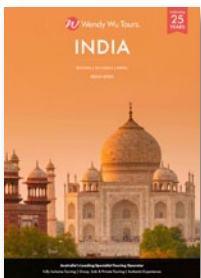


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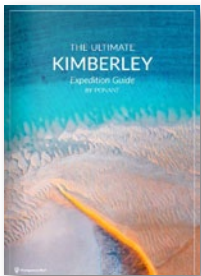
Wendy Wu Tours - India 2024 - 2025

Wendy Wu Tours' newly printed 2024-2025 India brochure features the operator's best-selling tours across the South Asian country, as well as Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Nepal. The guide also showcases three new Classic Tours, including a 14-day rail itinerary and two special Christmas tours. Guests can also read about the new 14-day Wildlife of India itinerary, as well as a brand-new collection of private tours, ranging from seven- to 18-days. One of those on offer is a 13-day Jewels of India journey, which takes in the sights of Delhi, visits the Taj Mahal, and includes tiger-spotting safaris within Ranthambore National Park.



AmaWaterways - Heart of the River 2025

The new AmaWaterways' digital brochure showcases a diverse range of new and returning European river cruises, as well as the debut of the cruise line's two new ships, *AmaMelodia* in Colombia and *AmaSintra* in Portugal, both set to launch in Jun 2025. The new 64-guest *AmaMelodia* will offer spacious twin-balcony staterooms, while sailing two seven-night itineraries - Wonders of Colombia and Magic of Colombia. *AmaSintra* will operate two seven-night itineraries in 2025, including the Enticing Douro, a roundtrip to Porto in Portugal, and the Flavours of Portugal & Spain, from Porto to Vega de Terron, Spain.



Ponant - The Kimberley Expedition Guide

Ponant has published a new brochure appealing to adventurous travellers who wish to explore the Kimberley region. Showcasing the unique features of each vessel, the 52-page guide also outlines specific itineraries and recommends travel seasons suited to each guest. The luxury cruise line also highlights its sustainability efforts and protocols, and features insights from the Ponant team, including an interview with Mick Fogg,

Director of Expeditions & Destination Development Asia Pacific, who has travelled on more than 130 voyages in the Kimberley.

TM gets down to business



TRAVELMANAGERS has wrapped up a massive month of business training events, which saw 64 of its personal travel managers (PTM) take part in a range of sessions across the country throughout Oct.

Hosted by the travel company's Business Partnership Management team, the gatherings included regional business development sessions, product and destination updates with suppliers, as well as systems training workshops.

National Business Partnership Manager, Julia McLean, said TravelManagers' 'boots on the ground' approach gives PTMs plenty of opportunities to work collaboratively.

As part of the training month, TravelManagers' Cruise Product Manager, Lia Malone, delivered a multi-state program of cruise product training.

Malone expressed her enthusiasm over seeing PTMs eager to brush up on their cruise expertise, and said, "I really love the format of our in-person training days".

"It's very conversational, which

allows PTMs to openly share their ideas - we all learn from each other," she added. JM

Victorian-based PTMs are pictured at a product lunch and preparing to learn more from a session with African safari operator Elephant Hills at Thai Tide restaurant.

Firefly debuts route

MALAYSIA Aviation Group (MAG) subsidiary Firefly has completed its maiden flight from its HQ at Penang International Airport to Don Mueang Int'l Airport (DMK) in Bangkok.

"This development not only improves regional accessibility for domestic travellers but also opens doors for international visitors, potentially boosting tourism, business travel and foreign investment," MAG CEO Ahmad Luqman Mohd Azmi said.

The low-cost carrier was founded in 2007 and offers flights to a range of ports in Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.

The latest route will operate five times a week.

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Globus family of brands was established in Switzerland in 1928. Family owned, they offer Globus first class escorted touring, Cosmos tours for budget-minded travel and Avalon Waterways luxury river cruises.

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